

Message Text

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47

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 SAB-01 OMB-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 EUR-25 SCCT-02

DRC-01 (ISO) W

----- 093654

R 261503Z MAR 74

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1968

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

USINT DAMASCUS

USMISSION GENEVA

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 1766

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, IS, EG, SY, JO

SUBJ: WHERE DAYAN STANDS TODAY

REF: TEL AVIV 9895

SUMMARY: SINCE FORMATION OF NEW GOVERNMENT, DAYAN HAS KEPT RELATIVELY LOW PUBLIC PROFILE WHILE AWAITING PUBLICATION OF AGRANAT COMMISSION'S INTERIM REPORT, EXPECTED LATE APRIL OR EARLY MAY, ON SHORTCOMINGS IN PREPARATION AND CONDUCT OF OCTOBER WAR. NONETHELESS, DAYAN CONTINUES TO PLAY IMPORTANT ROLE IN GOI DECISION-MAKING PROCESS WHICH NOW IS FOCUSED ON UPCOMING DISENGAGEMENT NEGOTIATIONS WITH SYRIA. END SUMMARY.

1. IN TWO MONTHS SINCE SIGNATURE OF EGYPTIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGE-
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MENT AGREEMENT, DAYAN IN PUBLIC HAS REMAINED SANGUINE ABOUT

PROSPECTS FOR A FURTHER SETTLEMENT WITH EGYPT, FIRM IN HIS COUNSEL AGAINST ESCALATION OF TENSIONS ON GOLAN HEIGHTS DESPITE STRONG LIKELIHOOD OF CONTINUED FIRING, RATHER PESSIMISTIC ABOUT NEAR-TERM PROSPECTS FOR SYRIAN-ISRAELI DISENGAGEMENT, AND DISINCLINED TO MOVE AT EARLY STAGE INTO NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN. IN HIS VARIOUS PRONOUNCEMENTS, DAYAN HAS ADHERED TO CHARACTERISTICALLY FLEXIBLE, PRAGMATIC APPROACH. DESPITE STORMY DOMESTIC POLITICAL CRISIS, AND CONTINUED CALLS FOR HIS RESIGNATION, DAYAN STILL ENJOYS STRONG POSITION IN INNER POLICY CIRCLES DUE IN LARGE MEASURE TO BASIC SIMILARITY OF HIS VIEWS AND THOSE OF MRS MEIR.

2. ON SYRIA, DAYAN IN KNESSET MARCH 21 MADE STRONG CASE FOR CONTINUED MODERATION IN LEVEL OF IDF RESPONSE TO SYRIAN FIRING, STRESSING THAT ESCALATION IN ITSELF WOULD NOT STOP FURTHER SYRIAN AGGRESSION AND COULD ONLY COMPLICATE DIFFICULTIES IN WAY OF NEGOTIATING DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT. WE DO NOT HAVE ANY FIRM EVIDENCE ON DAYAN'S CURRENT THINKING ON HOW TO ATTAIN DISENGAGEMENT, BUT RECENT PRESS REPORTS, WHICH MAY HAVE BEEN PLANTED BY SOURCES CLOSE TO DAYAN, CLAIM THAT HE HAS CONSIDERED PROPOSING (A) LIMITED ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM PART OF GOLAN HEIGHTS OCCUPIED IN 1967 (GOI ISSUED OFFICIAL DENIAL); (B) ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL FROM ALL OF SALIENT CAPTURED IN RECENT WAR IN OVERALL SETTLEMENT WITHOUT INTERMEDIATE STAGES. IT IS NOT CLEAR FROM THESE REPORTS WHETHER PROPOSAL (B) WOULD ALSO INCLUDE ANY WITHDRAWAL BEYOND 1967 CEASEFIRE LINE.

3. ONEGYPT, DAYAN HAS PUBLICLY STATED AT BAR-ILAN UNIV FEBRUARY 14 AND IN KNESSET MARCH 10 HIS BELIEF THAT SADAT IS GENUINELY INTERESTED IN PURSUING SETTLEMENT WITH ISRAEL (TEL AVIV 0937 AND 1431). PROMINENCE WHICH DAYAN HAS GIVEN TO EGYPTIAN DEVELOPMENT PLANS REFLECTS HIS VIEW THAT OPENING OF CANAL AND REHABILITATION OF CANAL CITIES WILL CONSTITUTE IMPORTANT, IF NOT ABSOLUTELY CONCLUSIVE, TEST OF SADAT'S INTENTIONS. DAYAN ALSO STATED IN MARCH 10 KNESSET SPEECH THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO FURTHER ISRAELI WITHDRAWAL IN SINAI EXCEPT IN FRAMEWORK OF PEACE TREATY WITH EGYPT. HE HAS INTENTIONALLY REFRAINED FROM INDICATING PUBLICLY BORDERS WHICH HE MAY HAVE IN MIND FOR FINAL SETTLEMENT.

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4. ON JORDAN, DAYAN HAS NOT ADDRESSED HIMSELF PUBLICLY TO DISPOSITION OF WEST BANK SINCE HIS APPEARANCE AT BAR-ILAN UNIVERSITY FEBRUARY 14 AT WHICH TIME HE SAID THAT HE COULD NOT SUPPORT A GOVERNMENT WHICH WOULD RETURN MOST OF WEST BANK TO HUSSEIN. DAYAN ALSO HAS GIVEN NO INDICATIONS THAT HE BELIEVES THAT ISRAEL SHOULD TAKE ANY INITIATIVE IN NEAR FUTURE TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN. HE TOLD ISRAEL

BONDS CONFERENCE JAN 31 THAT ISRAEL LIVED IN PEACE WITH PALESTINIANS ON WEST BANK, AND THERE WAS LITTLE URGENCY FOR NEGOTIATIONS WITH JORDAN.

5. DAYAN HAS KEPT RELATIVELY LOW POLITICAL PROFILE SINCE RESOLUTION OF DOMESTIC POLITICAL CRISIS WITH RECONSTITUTION OF OUTGOING TRIPARTITE COALITION. HIS POLITICAL FUTURE STILL REMAINS UP IN THE AIR, DEPENDING PRINCIPALLY ON FINDINGS OF AGRANAT COMMISSION. INTERIM COMMISSION REPORT IS EXPECTED IN LATE APRIL OR EARLY MAY AND, WHATEVER ITS FINDINGS, IT CAN BE EXPECTED TO STIMULATE NEW CALLS FOR HIS RESIGNATION.

6. WE CANNOT PREDICT AT THIS TIME HOW DAYAN WILL RESPOND TO PUBLICATION OF AGRANAT REPORT WHICH CLEARLY IS VERY MUCH ON HIS MIND THESE DAYS. MUCH OF HIS COMPLICATED POLITICAL MANEUVERING IN LAST MONTH AND A HALF CONSTITUTED ATTEMPT TO DEFUSE CRITICISM AGAINST HIM FOR FAILING TO STEP DOWN WHILE KEEPING OPEN HIS OPTION OF CONTINUING IN OFFICE. BRITISH PUBLISHER REPORTEDLY HAS OFFERED DAYAN VERY LARGE SUM FOR HIS MEMOIRS AND IT CANNOT BE EXCLUDED THAT DAYAN WOULD RESIGN TO WRITE THEM AFTER AGRANAT COMMISSION'S FINDINGS ARE RELEASED.

7. DAYAN HAS INDICATED PUBLICLY, AS PART OF HIS EXPLANATION FOR HIS INITIAL DECISION NOT TO SERVE AS DEFMIN (SUBSEQUENTLY REVERSED) THAT HE FELT HIMSELF CLOSER IN MANY RESPECTS TO FOREIGN POLICY VIEWS OF RIGHTWING LIKUD THAN TO DOVISH ELEMENTS IN GOVERNING COALITION. WHILE THESE REMARKS IN PART WERE INTENDED FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT DAYAN REMAINS AT ODDS WITH MORE DOVISH ELEMENTS IN AND OUTSIDE LABOR PARTY, AND THAT SHOWDOWN BETWEEN HIMSELF AND HIS OPPONENTS WITHIN PARTY HAS BEEN POSTPONED, NOT RESOLVED.
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